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## Some doubts about “spurring students to action”

I like a clear and confident voice of the author with which she presents Habermas's, Gadamer's and Bakhtin's philosophical ideas. For her it is Bakhtin whose philosophy of dialogue provides the best foundations for the development of intercultural communicative competence.

A clear description and clearly formulated preferences recall my own early fascination with philosophical thought. The author is a teacher educator. How fortunate are her trainees – I think. But she also writes that “the role of education would be in spurring students to action rather than to absorbing skills and knowledge”. At this moment I ask myself – What action? An educational well-prepared action, like a school reform or an action research project? Or any revolutionary action which takes advantage of young people's enthusiasm in order to abolish old powers and replace them by the new ones?

We have had enough of it: *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity!* or *Proletarians of All Countries Unite!* Great words and villainous deeds. Why is it that Bakhtin's philosophy of dialogue seems to be another such slogan? Just like sociocultural theory of second language acquisition. Do contemporary American sociolinguists and SLA theorists realize that what was written in the Soviet Union by linguists, psychologists and philosophers could not be deprived of ideological pressures.

Even if quite a lot of what we hear now from American descendents of Vygotsky and Gal'perin is true, such claims as *thought is action*, are dangerously close to the most notorious slogan of my school days in the Polish People's Republic: *Byt kształtuje świadomość* (Reality shapes thinking). Such slogans are meaningless for my generation. They have been ridiculed to the extent which does not allow me to use them any more in any discourse except an ironical one.

It seems that Polish patronizing and ridiculing attitude towards the Russian language may be a consequence of the same process of overgeneralization of old traumas associated with the ideological impact of the language enforced upon the Poles. Indeed *thought is action* and words associated with negative actions are emotionally loaded with negative, or at best patronizing feelings.

Besides, Intercultural Communicative Competence may find its foundations in the philosophy of dialogue but the philosophy must be translated into classroom activities. Otherwise teachers will pass exams in dialogic philosophy but in class they will focus on knowledge and skills.